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Last week, the House Republican Steering Committee decided against naming Jeff Flake (R-AZ) to the Appropriation committee. I am very disappointed to see this decision. If we are ever going to control spending in Washington, we will need to change the culture of the Appropriations Committee. Members who request to be on the Appropriations Committee usually do so because they want to spend money and that breeds a culture of spending and spenders. For example, I never wanted to be on that committee because I don't want to spend money. Neither does Jeff Flake. He wants to save money, not spend it. Jeff would probably not have been able to change much all by himself even if he had gotten the appointment. But he would have been a canary in the earmark mine shaft and it would have been a start. We would have begun the process of changing that culture to one that looks for spending to eliminate rather than earmarks to hand out.

Next year, there will be several Republican vacancies on the Appropriations Committee because of retirements. Apparently, Republican Conference leadership is not yet ready to fully embrace fiscal conservatism, the elimination of earmarks and lower spending. They will have another opportunity to change the culture in the next Congress. Maybe they will be ready then.

I hope so.